

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Ghana

Post: Accra

Ghana's Leading Research Institute Endorses Modern Biotechnology

Report Categories:

Biotechnology and Other New Production Technologies

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Report Highlights:

General Information:

Dr. Victor Agyeman, Director-General of Ghana's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the nation's leading research institute, endorsed the use of modern biotechnology in an interview with Ghana's leading newspaper, Business & Financial Times. Dr. Agyeman stated "The use of modern biotechnology should not be a cause for alarm." He identified modern biotechnology as one of the vital new sciences needed in Ghana.

Ghana experiences fluctuations in the food sector due to the use of inferior seeds, traditional agricultural practices including tools and techniques, competition for land use, and climate change. Rapid population growth and increasing prosperity is also driving increased demand for food products. According to Dr. Vivian Oduro, a senior research scientist at the Biotechnology Nuclear Agricultural Research Institute, the application of modern biotechnology in Ghana could mitigate disease infections in staple crops such as mosaic or brown streak virus in cassava, which would enhance Ghana's food security.

Dr. Agyeman has assured farmers that modern biotechnology seeds would be amongst the choices available to them but not a requirement. Currently, there are no GMO crops being cultivated though the National Biosafety Authority has authorized confined field trials for Bt. Cowpea and NEWEST rice.